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Borough of South Molton



Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health
and Chief Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st. 1954.

113, East Street,
South Molton,
June, 1955

*To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and
Councillors of the Borough of South Molton.*

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

*I have the honour to present the Annual
Report on the Health and Sanitation Administration
of the Borough for the year 1954.*

Your obedient Servant,

*F. J. H. MARTIN,
M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.)
Medical Officer of Health.*

South Molton Borough

LIST OF STAFF

The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of:-

Part-time Officers :-

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.)

Medical Officer of Health.

A. J. C. NEX, C.R.S.I.

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Mrs. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

Whole-time Officer :-

H. SETTLE, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	5,910
Population (Registrar-General's Mid-Year Estimate)					3,090
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	980
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£18,325
Sum represented by a Penny Rate			...	...	£71

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS—	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	14	16	30
Illegitimate	2	0	2
			32

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 population 10.3

STILL BIRTHS—	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	0	1	1
Illegitimate	0	0	0
			1
			—

STILL BIRTH RATE per 1,000 total (live and still) births 30.3

DEATHS	Males	Females	Total
...	15	21	36

DEATH RATE per 1,000 population 11.6

DEATHS FROM Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	...	0

The Table below shows the comparative figures for the South Molton Borough and England and Wales.

The Local Birth and Death Rates are shown corrected by the Area Comparability Factors.

	Birth Rate per 1,000 population		Death Rate per 1,000 population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
S. Molton Borough ...	11.3	.32	9.2	31.2	0
England and Wales ...	15.2	—	11.3	25.5	—

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR.

			Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	1	0	1
Illegitimate	...	...	0	0	0
					1

DEATH RATE per 1,000 Live Births 31.2

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER 4 WEEKS.

			Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	1	0	1
Illegitimate	...	...	0	0	0
					1
					—

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)			...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age			...	0

CAUSES OF DEATHS DURING THE YEAR 1954.

			Males	Females
Malignant Neoplasm	...	...	0	1
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	...	1	6
Coronary Disease	...	...	0	1
Heart Disease	...	...	6	8
Other Circulatory Disease	...	...	0	1
Pneumonia...	...	...	1	0
Bronchitis	...	...	3	1
Other disease of Respiratory System	...	...	0	1
Gastritis and Enteritis	...	...	1	1
Nephritis	...	...	1	0
Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	...	1	0
Other defined and ill defined Diseases	...	...	1	1
			15	21
			—	—

TUBERCULOSIS—CASES NOTIFIED DURING 1954.

No new cases were notified during the year.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED IN 1954.

One case of Acute Poliomyelitis (paralytic) was notified during the year. A male, aged 8 years.

LOCAL DEATHS OVER 65 YEARS.

65—69	...	1	85—89	...	4
70—74	...	5	90—94	...	4
75—79	...	12	95 plus	...	0
80—84	...	2			
			Total	...	28

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA. HOSPITALS.

1. Tuberculosis.

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple has 29 beds.

2. Maternity Cases.

The Devon County Council are continuing to act as they did in 1947 as agents of the Regional Hospital Board until the Board has completed its own plans for the treatment of Maternity cases.

There is a ward of 14 beds with a fully qualified staff at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for maternity cases of doubt and difficulty.

Beds are also set aside for maternity cases in the South Molton and District Cottage Hospital.

The General Practitioners' Maternity Unit of 13 beds is at "Highfield," Victoria Road, Barnstaple.

3. Isolation of Infectious Diseases.

Cases are sent either to Whipton Hospital, near Exeter, or to the North Devon Isolation Hospital, which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. The latter is of recent construction and well equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases.

There are 20 beds available in cubicles for Infectious Cases.

A separate block for early Tuberculosis cases from North Devon is also available at this Hospital.

4. Small Pox.

The Small Pox Hospital, to which cases of Small Pox will be sent is at Upton Pine. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter 67158, and this is the same number for the ambulance.

5. General.

The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough of South Molton serves this area. There are 9 beds for general and maternity cases. The North Devon Infirmary, situated in Barnstaple also serves the area and provides Specialists' Services.

In South Molton there are also chronic sick patients at Beech House, but no further admissions are being made.

6. Clinics and Treatment Centres.

CHEST CLINICS.—These are held at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, below is a table giving days and times of attendance.

Tuesday	9. 0 a.m.	-	1. 0 p.m.	Clinic and X-Ray Examinations
	2. 0 p.m.	-	4. 0 p.m.	
Thursday	9. 0 a.m.	-	1. 0 p.m.	A.P. Refills
	2. 0 p.m.	-	4.30 p.m.	
Friday	9. 0 a.m.	-	1. 0 p.m.	A.P. Refills
	2. 0 p.m.	-	4. 0 p.m.	

V.D. CLINICS.—These are held at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple in the Annexe. Times and days are as below for the sessions.

FEMALES	—Monday 4 p.m.	Thursday 4.30 p.m.
MALES	—Monday 5.15 p.m.	Thursday 5.45 p.m.

7. Professional Nursing in the Homes.

There is one District Nurse living in South Molton Borough who is also a Midwife.

8. Laboratory Facilities.

The main Laboratory is situated at 7 Dix's Field, Exeter, and Dr. Moore is the Director. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients. Bacteriological examinations of water and milk are also carried out. The service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the medical practitioners.

There is also a Pathological Laboratory at the former Barnstaple and North Devon Dispensary building in Barnstaple with a full-time Pathologist and Technical Staff to meet the needs of the whole North Devon area.

There is a Blood Bank at this Laboratory.

9. Immunization against Diphtheria.

During the year 56 children received Primary Injections and 48 received Reinforcing Injections.

10. Vaccination.

The following table shows the number of Vaccinations carried out in their age groups during the year :—

Under 1 year—5; 1-4 years—8; 5-14 years—1;
15 years and over—2.

11. Ambulance Services.

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (i.e. the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the Devon Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the agency of St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme an ambulance station has been established at South Molton. The districts served are South Molton Borough and South Molton Rural District. The Hospital Car Service, also under the Devon County Council, is available on application to the Hospital, and the Ambulance Service is empowered to hire cars in urgent cases when an ambulance is not necessary.

12. Acute Poliomyelitis.

One case occurred during the year.

13. Food Poisoning.

No cases occurred during the year.

14. Home Help Service.

There are Home Helps operating in South Molton Borough and the scheme is run by the Devon County Council. During the year help was rendered in 9 cases as follows :—

Maternity 7; Old Age and Chronic Sick 2.

Any cases recommended by a Doctor, Health Visitor or District Nurse is entitled to a Home Help. The Home Helps do any work in the house normally done by the housewife.

I desire to thank the Town Clerk and the Sanitary Inspectors for the help they have given me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply is obtained from the gathering grounds on the foothills of Exmoor and from the Holywell Spring and is impounded in the Holywell Reservoir which contains approximately 7,000,000 gallons. It is piped therefrom to the Filter House at Westland Bridge and is passed through three Candy Pressure Filters and thence by trunk main of 6ins. diameter to the Service Reservoirs in North Road, South Molton, the Service Reservoirs being two in number and containing 340,000 gallons, the water is then distributed through the Town mains which are of varying diameters. The water is sampled and analysed at regular intervals. I am pleased to again report that the Filters and the water supply system generally continue to be maintained in a highly efficient manner by your Waterworks Foreman. Chlorination of the water is being carried out by the drip feed method at the Service Reservoirs and is proving to be satisfactory. A full supply of water has been maintained throughout the year.

RESULTS OF SAMPLING AND ANALYSES.

A total of 6 samples of water have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and four of these were placed in Grade One and the remainder in Grade Two. These results can be regarded as satisfactory.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS.

Analytical Examination of Water.

Description of Sample.—Sample of water from Holywell Reservoir.

Characters.

Colour—Very slight green tint. *Turbidity*—Clear. *Taste*—Natural. *Odour*—None. *Suspended Matters*—Slight trace of humus of vegetation. A few diatoms and infusorians.

ANALYSIS.

(Parts per Hundred Thousand).

Chlorine present as Chlorides	...	...	...	...	1.0
Nitrogen present as Nitrites	...	...	...	...	0
Nitrogen present as Nitrates	...	...	...	...	0.095
Phosphates	...	...	...	...	0
Sulphates	...	...	...	...	...
Free Carbon Dioxide	...	...	...	...	...
Total Hardness equivalent to Calcium Carbonate	...	...	...	...	3.2
Temporary Hardness (annulled by boiling)	...	...	...	...	0.5
Permanent Hardness (not altered by boiling)	...	...	...	...	2.7
Saline Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0010
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	...	0.0024
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27 deg. C	...	...	...	...	0.02
Oxygen absorbed immediately	...	...	...	...
Lead	...	...	...	...	0
Copper	...	...	...	...	0
Zinc	...	...	...	...	0
Iron in solution	...	...	...	...	0
Iron in sedimentary form	...	...	...	...	0
Manganese	...	...	...	...	0
Total Solid Constituents	...	...	...	...	5.0

Organic Matter observed in igniting the Solid Constituents, None.

Hydrogen Ion Concentration equivalent to pH ... 6.4

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The first portion of the new Sewage Disposal Plant at Mole Bridge is working very satisfactorily and the effluent is of a very high standard.

The Engineers are proceeding with the plans and specification for the second part of the sewerage scheme which will when completed provide for the treatment of sewage from the whole town.

Sewers.—The sewers in the Borough are generally in good order.

HOUSING.

10 Traditional Houses were erected and tenanted during the year. 2 Private Bungalows and Houses have been completed during the year.

116 Traditional Houses and Bungalows, and 16 Non-Traditional Houses have been erected since World War II and 8 Traditional Houses and 4 Bungalows are under construction.

PLANS.

26 Plans for new buildings and extensions have been dealt with under Planning and Byelaws during the year.

SANITATION.

Number of Houses inspected	...	...	...	8
Number of preliminary notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	...	4
Number of Statutory Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	...	1

Chief defects that have been dealt with are:—

Roof repairs, and made watertight.
Lavatory Pans renewed
Choked drains
Stoves and cooking appliances renewed.
General repairs to walls, floors and ceilings
Improvement of domestic water supplies. A considerable number of new services have been laid.

Few Public Health nuisances have occurred in the Borough during the year and those which have occurred have mostly been dealt with informally and remedied.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

Domestic refuse is collected regularly in the built-up area of the Borough, and monthly collections are made from outlying Farms and Hamlets. Refuse is carted to the dump at Hacche Road and the dump is regularly treated for the destruction of Rodents. The Refuse Dump at Hacche Road has been enlarged and is capable of receiving refuse for several years.

BAKEHOUSES.

Bakehouses are inspected periodically. With the co-operation of all owners considerable improvements have been effected or are still being carried out. Generally speaking the whole of the Bakehouses in the Borough are in good order.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Factories and Workshops are inspected periodically and generally are found to be kept as required by the Factory Acts. Owners have from time to time been asked to make minor improvements and have readily done so.

Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Borough :-

Number on Register	...	...	...	...	12
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	15
Notices served	...	...	...	...	Nil

Factories in which Section 7 is enforced by the borough :—

Number on Register	...	...	...	...	35
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	12
Notices served	...	...	...	...	Nil
Cases in which defects were found and remedied					3

MEAT AND FOODS CONDEMNED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

Unsound food including meat is surrendered by Traders and a Certificate is given. The unsound food is marked with a green dye and is given to persons to boil for poultry and pig food.

The following foods have been surrendered as unfit for human consumption :—

Meat and Offal :-

English Beef	...	...	...	...	...	62 lbs.
Mutton	...	...	...	...	...	120 lbs.
English Pork	...	...	...	...	...	30 lbs.
1 Pigs Pluck	...	...	...	...	...	4 lbs.

<i>Tinned Foods</i>	<i>No. of Tins</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Meat	...	3
Milk	...	4

INSPECTION OF FOOD PREMISES.

During the year a number of visits were made to Food Premises in the Borough, and the condition generally was found to be good. All premises requiring registration receive regular visits and all are maintained in good condition. Some improvements have been made by Traders at the request of the Department.

ICE CREAM.

Ice Cream is made at only one shop in the Borough from which samples are taken regularly.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

Two Private Slaughterhouses were licensed during the year, after reconditioning, for a period of three years and both are kept satisfactorily.

Animals Slaughtered in the Borough

Beasts 45; Sheep and Lambs 106; Calves 3; Pigs 76.

MEAT INSPECTION.

Up to July, 1954 all meat for the Borough came from Barnstaple where inspection took place, since that date three of the Butchers out of a total of five do their own slaughtering and the remainder obtain their supplies from Barnstaple.

Meat obtained from Barnstaple is inspected at the Barnstaple slaughterhouse before dispatch, and meat from licensed slaughterhouses in the Borough is inspected by Mr. A. J. Nex.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PEST ACT.

The following methods for the destruction of Rats and Mice are taken:—

The premises are carefully examined for Rat runs, and clean meal pre-baits are laid down, which are left for a day or two, when poisoned baits are used, and the results are very satisfactory. The Refuse Tip at Hacche Road, the Sewage Outfalls at Mole Bridge, West End Terrace and Cooks Cross are periodically treated.

A number of private houses and business premises have been visited on receipt of complaints and disinfection has been carried out.

In conclusion I would like to thank Mr. Nex for the able assistance he has given me during the year.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HAROLD SETTLE,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

